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# LETTER

To the AUTHOR of *Some  
Brief Observations on the Pa-  
raphrase and Notes of the*

Judicious JOHN LOCKE,

*Relating to the Womens Ex-  
ercising their*

## Spiritual Gifts

In the CHURCH.

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L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year, 1716.

LETTER

Indicating John Locke

Spiritual Gifts

IN THE CHURCH

Memorandum. In looking over a manuscript of  
B. Coats, being a kind of Diary or Occurrences of  
His Life, I saw a Letter of Margery Peters in  
answer to his, where she says that he had written  
about Women's Preaching, in which she tells him  
that, he had better not have published his  
Thoughts, & in a very pretty stile, speaks  
in approbation of such Women whom the Lord  
may have employed in visiting & travelling abroad.  
The Letter is dated the 12th of Nov. 1715 which

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# LETTER

To the AUTHOR of  
*Some brief Observations  
on the Paraphrase and  
Notes of the Judicious  
John Locke, Relating to  
WOMEN'S Exercising  
their Spiritual Gifts in  
the Church.*

Respected Friend, B. Coole,

HAVING perused Thine, con-  
taining a Letter to M. P. to-  
gether with John Locke's Para-  
phrase and Notes on certain Passages in  
the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, and  
thy

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was above 8 months ago.

thy own Observations thereon, I was willing to communicate to thee, certain Thoughts which have occur'd to me in Relation thereto.

Quickly after the Publication of *Locke's Paraphrase and Notes* on the Epistles, his Book fell into my Hands, upon the Reading of which I took particular Notice of the very Passages thou hast publish'd, and transcrib'd them into my *Common-Place-Book*, thinking they might be of some Service, to vindicate the Doctrine of Friends concerning *Women's Preaching in the Church*.

I was therefore very glad to hear, that a Man of thy Reading and Sagacity had a Mind to Reprint the same with Observations: not questioning but thou would'st have made an excellent Use of those Notes of his, for the Clearing up the seeming Paradox to some Men, of *A Woman's Right to Preach or Teach in the Church*.

But I must confess, that when I had read thy Observations, I was not a little concern'd, to find no greater Advantage made of that Author's Remarks; nay,

but, *that the same*



it appear'd to me, that what thou had'st annex'd and subjoin'd did very much Prejudice his Argument.

I am therefore about to let thee see, whether I had just Cause to be concern'd thereat or not.

In Page 16, thou say'st, "In the Exercise of spiritual Gifts, tho' inspired by the Holy Ghost; yet they (speaking of Women) were under the Restriction of Praying and Prophesying only: They were not to assume the Personage of Doctors.

In Page 17, "That tho' Prophesying was an Exercise the Women were inspired to, as well as the Men, yet it was for the sakes of the Members of the same Communion, and not for Strangers.

And in Page 18, "That tho' it is past Doubt, there were in the Church before the Apostacy (and in the Church that is out of the Apostacy) Prophetesses, that at Home, in their own particular Congregations, did, by Inspiration, speak either in Prayer or Prophecy, to the setting forth the high Praises

" Praises of God; yet it is also evident,  
 " That there were No APOSTLES  
 " of that Sex: nor did we ever read in  
 " the New Testament of any that were  
 " Sent with Commission, as *Matt.* 28.  
 " 19. or as *Paul* said, he was sent to  
 " open blind Eyes, &c. Tho' there were  
 " many that laboured with him in other  
 " Gospel Services, *Phil.* 4. 3. In all  
 " which they were never to forget their  
 " Sex, nor intrude into such Services  
 " as were only proper to the Men.

And in Page 10, making *Locke's*  
 Words thy own, " The Women (saith  
 " he, and that very truly) in the  
 " Churches were not to assume the  
 " Personage of Doctors, or speak there  
 " as Teachers.

The Substance and Meaning of these  
 Four Passages I take to be this,

1<sup>st</sup>, That Women are only to pray  
 (and prophesy; and by Prophecy thou  
 wouldst have us understand, not Teach-  
 ing, but Setting forth the High Praises  
 of God.

2<sup>dly</sup>, That Women are to exercise  
 their Prophetical Gifts no where but at  
 Home,

Home, in their own particular Congregations, and must not go abroad to preach unto Strangers.

Now if this is what thy Observations imply, which I think is very plain, then I must entreat thee once more to peruse *John Locke's* Remarks, and I believe thou wilt find, That he has not gone so far as to assert, that by Prophefying we are not to understand Teaching.

In Page 9, *Locke* says, " That even  
 " in these extraordinary Praises which any  
 " one sung to God by the Immediate Mo-  
 " tion and Impulse of the Holy Ghost,  
 " which was one of the Actions called Pro-  
 " phesying, they sung alone. In p. 9, says  
 " he, Prophefying was speaking unto o-  
 " thers to Edification, and Exhortation, and  
 " Comfort. But every Speaking to others  
 " to any of these Ends was not Prophef-  
 " ing, but only then when such speaking  
 " was a spiritual Gift, performed by the  
 " Immediate and Extraordinary Motion of  
 " the Holy Ghost, See Ch. xiv. 1, 12,  
 " 24, 30. It is plain, says *Locke* in an-  
 " other Place, that this Covering the  
 " Head in Women is restrain'd to some

" particular Actions, which they perform-  
 " ed in the Assembly, express'd by the  
 " Words Praying and Propheying, V. 4  
 " & 5 of Ch. xi. which whatever they  
 " signifie, must have the same Meaning  
 " when applied to the Women in the 5th  
 " Verse, that they have when applied to  
 " the Men in the 4th Verse. Again,  
 " The next thing to be considered, says  
 " he, is, what is here to be understood  
 " by Praying and Propheying; and that  
 " seems to be the Performing of some  
 " particular publick Action in the Assem-  
 " bly, by some one Person, which was for  
 " that Time peculiar to that Person, and  
 " whilst it lasted the rest of the Assem-  
 " bly silently assisted. Then he exa-  
 " mines what that Action was: As to  
 " Propheying, the Apostle in express  
 " Words tells us, Ch. xiv. 3 & 12. that  
 " it was speaking in the Assembly.  
 " The same is evident as to Praying, that  
 " the Apostle means by it, Praying pub-  
 " lickly with an audible Voice in the  
 " Congregation. See Ch. 14, 19. Now  
 " that the Spirit of God and the Gift of  
 " Prophecy should be poured out upon  
 " Women as well as Men in the Time of  
 " the



"the Gospel, is plain from Acts ii. 17.  
 "And then where could be a fitter Place  
 "for them to utter their Prophecies in  
 "than in the Assemblies? and so on.  
 "And in Page 12, he says, "But  
 "yet this Subordination, which God for  
 "Orders sake had instituted in the World,  
 "hindered not but that by the Super-  
 "natural Gifts of the Spirit, he might  
 "make Use of the Weaker Sex to any  
 "Extraordinary Function, whenever he  
 "thought fit, as well as he did the Men.  
 "These are the express Words and  
 "Quotations which thou hast given us  
 "of Locke's. Now I would appeal to  
 "all unprejudiced Persons, and even to  
 "thy own sedate Consideration, Whether  
 "the Notes above-cited were not In-  
 "tended to evince and demonstrate  
 "That Women as well as Men had and  
 "were to have the Gifts of Prayer and  
 "Prophecy; and that God might make  
 "Use of the weaker Sex to any extra-  
 "ordinary Functions by the Supernatural  
 "Gifts of the Spirit; and whenever Wo-  
 "men were moved or inspired by the  
 "Holy Ghost, they had the same Liber-  
 "ty.

ty to speak in the Congregation as the  
Men.

How far therefore thou hast truly  
taken the Sense of Judicious Locke;  
who thou thinkest it cannot be denied  
has express'd himself according to the  
Mind of the Holy Ghost, must be left  
to every ones Observation. It appears to  
me very plain that thou hast not made  
that Advantage and right Use of the  
Learned Author's Understanding, in  
these Particulars, as thou mightest have  
done for the Vindication of Truth;  
and which I can't but think John  
Locke himself would have done, had he  
had but a few of the Opportunities  
thou hast had in the Assemblies of the  
Lord's People.

I shall in the next place consider,  
how well thy Assertion, That Women  
are not to Exercise their Propheick Gifts  
amongst Strangers, will hold and agree  
with what is written in the very Text  
thou hast quoted, and in other Places  
of Holy Scripture.

1 Cor. xiv. 22. Wherefore Tongues are  
for a Sign, not to them that believe, but  
to them that believe not; but Prophecy  
serveth

*serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe.*

From this Text thou would'st make the Apostles Judgment to be, p. 17.

"That tho' Prophesying was an Exer-

"cise the Women were called to, as

"well as the Men, yet it was for

"the sakes of the Members of the

"same Communion and not for Stran-

"gers.

To see clearly that this is a forced Sense of the Apostles Words, let us look into the Original Context, which in the Verse but now cited is Word for Word thus:

*Wherefore Tongues are for a Sign, not to them that believe, but to the Unbelievers; but Prophecy not to the Unbelievers, but to them that believe.*

Now there is nothing in the Original for the Word *serveth*, put into our Translation; but the Word *Sign* is there to be understood according to Grammatical Construction.

Besides, how contradictory does the Interpretation thou hast put on the Apostle's Words make the next Verse but

but one, where it is said, *But if all Prophecy, (which must include the Women) and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned; he is convicted of all, he is judged of all.* Does not the Apostle here set forth the Service of Prophecy in general, to Unbelievers and Unlearned? And may not the Words *come in*, indicate a Stranger, who might share in the Advantage of Prophecy, so he did but understand the Tongue the Person prophesied in? Nay, the very Design of the Context is to shew, that the Gift of Tongues could be of no Service to any of the Congregation but such as understood them, but that Prophecy was of *Universal Service* to Believers and Unbelievers, and consequently to Strangers, how foreign soever, provided they were acquainted with the Language he or she was speaking in.

Now I do verily think, one might fairly infer from the Apostles own Words, That if in a Congregation there were Abundance of such we call *Strangers* in the common Acceptation, and never so few Acquaintance of the Person



son exercised in the propheticall Gift; yet the *Strangers* might be profited by; what he or she should be moved of the Holy Ghost to deliver, as well as those belonging to the same Congregation.

And I think we may safely conclude, That should Women, gifted for the Ministry, be Hundereds of Miles from their own Habitations, yet were they moved of the Holy Ghost to speak in an Assembly of *Strangers*, to use the Apostles Phrase, *they might be convinced, and judged, &c.*

We have two Instances out of the New Testament, of Women that travel'd to preach, or carry Tidings of Jesus Christ, the *Messiah*.

1st, *The Woman of Samaria*, Joh. iv. 28, 29. Jesus having discoursed her about Worship, tells her, that *the Hour cometh, and now is, when the true Worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth.* We find our blessed Lord made choice of a Woman, to reveal unto her the true Christian Doctrine, to wit, *That God was a Spirit, and to be worshipped in Spirit and*

in Truth. But when his Disciples came, they marvelled that he talked with the Woman: It looks as if they were as narrow in their Views then as some are now a-days, in regard to Women. However it is said, *The Woman went her Way into the City, and saith to the Men, Come, see a Man that hath told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?* 'Tis very probable she preach'd more than this, though the Evangelist has not noted it: But let that be as it will, what she said had a powerful Reach with it, for 'tis said, *They went out of the City and came unto Jesus; And many of the Samaritans of that City believed on him, for the Saying of the Woman, who Testified, He told me all that ever I did. Ver. 38, 39. And many more believed because of his own Word, and said unto the Woman, Now we believe not because of thy Saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know That this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the World, Ver. 41, 42. Oh! the wonderful Effects of the true Ministry, attended with the convincing Power and Life of Jesus, tho' proceeding*

ing from the *Weaker Vessel*. What shall we that profess Christianity despise the Testimony of *Women* sent us by the Lord, when the *Samaritans*, who were next kin to Idolaters, if not really so, embraced this poor Woman's Testimony with so much Zeal and Affection?

2dly, *Mary Magdalen*, chosen by our Blessed Lord, to go carry the glad Tidings of his Resurrection, a main Point of the Christian Faith. *Joh. 20. 10, to 18.* Then the Disciples went away again unto their own House. But Mary stood without at the Sepulchre weeping; and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the Sepulchre, and seeth two Angels in white, sitting, the one at the Head, and the other at the Feet, where the Body of Jesus had lain: And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She  
 sup.

supposing him to be the Gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turneth her self, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father: But go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalen came and told the Disciples, That she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her. O worthy Messenger! What an Instance of Love, of Zeal and of Fervency do we see here in a Woman! Let us, my Friend, rather set forth the Mission and Virtues of Mary, than go about to detract from the Qualification and Nobility of her Sex.

By these two Instances, we see that our Blessed Lord, when personally upon Earth, did not think Women unworthy his Regard; but on the contrary converses familiarly with them, intrusts them with the most profound and



and weighty Doctrine of the Christian Faith. And one of them had an actual Commission, viz. *Go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* And tho' the Evangelist does not say the other was *bid to go* by Jesus; but that *she went her way to the City*: Yet inasmuch as the Discourse she had with Jesus occasioned, and no doubt constrain'd her to go, I see not why it may not be taken as a Commission from our Blessed Lord himself, and made a just Parallel to our Women, who, from the Communication with Jesus in Spirit, and from the constraining Love they find in their Hearts, go and call unto their Neighbours and their Countrymen, to come and see him who reveals to 'em the most secret Things in their Hearts, and gives 'em of that Water that is in them as a Well springing up unto Eternal Life.

But since thou hast instanced that Passage of *Matthew*, where Jesus saith unto his Disciples, *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations*, as containing a spe-

cial Commission to Men, which the Women can no ways be intituled to, we shall examine whether that Passage relates only to Men, or the Apostles.

We don't find the Disciples went their way immediately upon receiving this Commission; but were commanded that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the Promise of the Father, (compare Luk. 24. 49. with Acts i. 4, to 8:) which, saith Jesus, you have heard of me, For John truly baptized with Water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many Days hence. When they therefore were come together they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the Times or the Seasons, which the Father hath put in his own Power. But ye shall receive Power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be Witnesses unto me, both in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost Part of the Earth.

Here we see, that before they were to enter upon their Commission of Discipling, and Baptizing the Nations, they

they were to be baptized themselves with the Holy Ghost, and then to receive Power to preach Jesus Christ unto the Nations. And by the way I wou'd observe, that there were Women amongst the Disciples, unto whom those very Words were spoken, for the Context says, *Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath Days Journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an Upper Room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, &c. These all continued with one accord in Prayer and Supplication with the Women, and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with his Brethren. And when the Day of Pentecost was fully come they were all with one accord in one Place. And suddenly there came a Sound from Heaven, as of a rushing mighty Wind, and it filled the House where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them Cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and it sate upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them Utterance.*



Now who does not clearly see, that the Word *They* so often in the Context, is relative to both Men and Women assembled? 'Tis evident also, that the Particles *all* and *each* must include the Women. And to put it beyond Doubt that Women were amongst them, the Apostle *Peter* begins his Apology with the Words of the Prophet *Joel*, as being then fulfilled and come to pass. Chap. xi. 14. *Ye Men of Judea*, says he, *and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my Words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the Third Hour of the Day: But this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last Days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy, and your Young Men shall see Visions, and your Old Men shall dream Dreams. And on my Servants, and on my Handmaidens I will pour out in those Days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy, &c.*

We find here are *Daughters* and *Handmaidens* on whom God would pour out  
of



of his Spirit, and they should prophesie; and can we think, that *Peter* would have applied this Propheſie at that Time, as fulfilled, if there had been no Women amongst them that had then ſpoken as the *Spirit gave them Utterance*.

Now then let us enter into the Conſideration of the Nature and End of this prophetical Gift it ſelf, and ſee if we can diſcover any Difference betwixt the ſame, when Exercis'd by Women, and when Exercis'd by Men.

That this prophetical Gift was ſomething of a Universal Nature *Joel's* Words confirm, and that it was more profitable than any other Gift, the Apoſtle *Paul's* Words confirm; for he ſays, *I Cor. xiv. 1. Follow after Charity, and deſire ſpiritual Gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. And Ver. 5. I would that ye alſo ſpoke with Tongues, but rather that ye propheſied: for greater is he that propheſieth, than he that ſpeaketh with Tongues, except he interpret, that the Church may receive Ediſying.*

I have not ſeen any Place in Holy Scripture that has made any Diſtinction between Prophecy when delivered by

Man, and Prophecy when delivered by a Woman; 'Tho' it may be very true what *John Locke* has said, " That one of the Actions call'd *Prophefying*, was *a Singing unto God with an Inspired Hymn*: But thou seemest to confine it to that Sence only, p. 17. " By *Prophefying* I mean, speaking to the Praise and Glory of God, as *Moses*, *Aaron* and *Miriam*; or as *Mary* and *Elizabeth* did. But that this could be only one Action of Prophefying, and not the the full Extent and Meaning of Prophefying, is evident from the Apostles Description of it.

Since therefore the Holy Scriptures have no where distinguished the Nature of this Gift in a Man, from the same in a Woman, let us consider the Description the Apostle has given of Prophecy, and apply it to the Women.

*Prophecy*, says the Apostle, is a speaking unto others to Edification, and Exhortation and Comfort. And it has been prov'd this Action was perform'd in the Congregation.

Now this Definition contains a three-fold Use; 1<sup>st</sup>, Speaking to Edification,  
in

in order to inform and improve. 2dly, To Exhortation, in order to stir up and awake. 3dly, To Comfort, in order to console and refresh.

Whoever therefore had the Gift of Prophecy, had it for the End and Purposes mention'd, but from Joel's and the Apostle's Words Women had and were to have this Gift of Prophecy, it follows therefore, Women endued with the Gift of Prophecy, when mov'd of the Lord, have a Power to speak in the Congregation for the End and Purposes afore mentioned.

But thou makest Use of Locke's Words, and say'st, " They were not " to assume the Personage of Doctors. This is very true, and what we all believe, they are not to assume, or take upon them an Authority or Function the Lord has not called them to, or gifted them for, and I believe this holds in respect to the Men also. But to use the Words of Locke too, p. 12. " This Subordination which God for Orders sake " had instituted in the World, hindred " not, but that by the Supernatural " Gifts of the Spirit, he might make



" Use of the weaker Sex to any Ex-  
 " traordinary Function whenever he  
 " thought fit, *as well as* he did of the  
 " Men.

I know indeed the Apostle has spoke  
 of a Subjection the Women were to be  
 found in during the Exercise of their  
 Gifts, but this relates not to the Gifts  
 themselves, but to their Appearance  
 and Deportment. And to express it in  
*Locke's* own Words " when they thus  
 " either pray'd or prophesied by the  
 " *Motion and Impulse* of the Holy Ghost,  
 " Care was taken, that whilst they  
 " were *Obeying* God, who was pleased  
 " by his Spirit to set them a *speaking*,  
 " the Subjection of their Sex should  
 " not be forgotten, but own'd and pre-  
 " serv'd by their being cover'd. Hence  
 " the Arguments in the Case for Co-  
 " *vering*, and in the other for *Silence*,  
 " are all drawn from the *Natural* Su-  
 " periority of the Man, and the Sub-  
 " jection of the Woman. In the one,  
 " the Woman without an extraordi-  
 " nary Call was to keep silent, as a  
 " Mark of her Subjection; in the o-  
 " ther



" other, where she was to speak by an  
 " extraordinary Call and Commission  
 " from God, she was to continue the  
 " Profession of her Subjection in keep-  
 " ing her self cover'd,  
 " Here by the way it is to be observ'd  
 " That there was extraordinary Pray-  
 " ing to God by the Impulse of the Spi-  
 " rit, as well as speaking unto Men for  
 " their Edification, Exhortation and  
 " Comfort. 1 Cor. 14. 15. I will pray  
 " with the Spirit, and I will pray with the  
 " Understanding also: I will sing with the  
 " Spirit, and I will sing with the Under-  
 " standing also. Rom. 8. 26. Likewise  
 " the Spirit also helpeth our Infirmities;  
 " for we know not what we should pray for  
 " as we ought; but the Spirit it self mak-  
 " eth Intercession for us, with Groanings  
 " which cannot be uttered. Jude 20. But  
 " ye Beloved, building up your selves on  
 " this most holy Faith, praying in the ha-  
 " ly Ghost.  
 Now to conclude the Argument  
 on this Head, does it any ways appear  
 that Locke has said, That Women are  
 not to Preach or Teach (which are syno-  
 nymous Terms in the Evangelists, as  
 appears

appears by comparing the Commission of our Saviour in *Mat. 28. 19.* Go ye therefore teach all Nations; with *Mark, xvi. 15.* Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature) in the Congregation? Or, that he thought Prophecy in a Women, was no more than a Hymn, or a setting forth the high Praises of God? But on the contrary it evidently appears, that he has made both Prayer and Prophecy to signify the very same in the Woman as in the Man. And it as evidently appears, he has not restricted the Woman to one particular Function, but allows them to have any extraordinary Function, as God thinks fit, and to exercise their Gifts of Prayer and Prophesying, when inspired of the Holy Ghost accordingly.

Lastly, to shew how far thou hast deviated from the constant and universal Sense of Friends in this Matter, and how much nearer the Sentiments of *Locke* approach thereto, I shall transcribe a Passage out of *Robert Barclay's* Apology, a Book which we have approved of as a People, and which has

as a witness in the Evangelical receiv'd

receiv'd divers Impressions by the direct  
Order of Friends.

Prop. X. Sect. 26. " Seeing Male and  
" Female are one in Christ Jesus, and  
" that he hath given his Spirit no less  
" to one than to the other: when God  
" moveth by his Spirit in a Woman, we  
" judge it no ways unlawful for her to  
" preach in the Assemblies of God's  
" People. Neither think we that of  
" Paul, 1 Cor. 14. 34. to reprove the  
" Inconsiderate and Talkative Women a-  
" mong the Corinthians, who troubled  
" the Church of Christ with their un-  
" profitable Questions: Or, that 1 Tim.  
" 2. 11, 12. That Women ought to learn  
" in Silence, not usurping Authority over  
" the Man, any ways repugnant to this  
" Doctrine; because it's clear, that  
" Women have Prophesied and Preach'd  
" in the Church, else had that saying of  
" Joel been badly applied by Peter, Acts  
" 2. 27. And seeing Paul himself in the  
" same Epistle to the Corinthians giveth  
" Rules how Women should begave  
" themselves in their publick Preaching  
" and Praying, it would be a manifest  
" Contradiction, if that Place were o-  
" other.



"therwise taken a larger Sense: And  
 "the same *Paul* speaks of a Woman  
 "that laboured with him in the *Work*  
 "of the *Gospel*; and it is written, that  
 "Philip had four Daughters that pro-  
 "phesied, *Acts* 21. 9. And lastly it hath  
 "been observed, That God hath effe-  
 "ctually in this Day *Converted many*  
 "Souls by the Ministry of *Women*; and  
 "by them also frequently comforted  
 "the Souls of his Children: which ma-  
 "nifest Experience puts the thing be-  
 "yond all Controversie.

Had I not confin'd my self to the  
 Bounds of an Epistle, I could produce  
 the Opinions of abundance of Persons  
 in Favour of Friends Doctrine, but  
 must now only give an Instance or two.  
 That Famous Martyr, and as some  
 have term'd him, the *English* Apostle,  
 says, in Answer to Sir *Thomas Moor*,  
 p. 252. 'If History be true, *Women*  
 'have preached since the Opening of the  
 'Gospel.

And *Martin Luther*, the first Reformer  
 of the *Romish* Doctrine in *Germany* said,  
 'That 'tis wickedly done of the *Romish*  
 'Clergy, to assume to themselves only  
 'this



' this Authority, to *Teach*, and be *Priests*  
 ' and *Ministers*, and that every good  
 ' Christian (not only Men, but even  
 ' *Women* also) is a *Preacher*.

I could produce Instances also where-  
 in God has made Choice of *Women* for  
 the Bringing about extraordinary E-  
 vents: And History furnishes us with  
 large Accounts of *Women*, who have  
 excel'd in Divine and Moral Virtues:  
*Women* who have shewn great Capa-  
 cities for Learning and Science, and  
 who have discharg'd with great Con-  
 duct and Magnanimity, the highest  
 Functions in Civil Life.

When the Question is therefore, whe-  
 ther they may act in a Function that  
 consists purely in the Exercise of their  
 Intellectual Faculties (divinely Influ-  
 enced) which every Body I think allows  
 to be the same as Mens, a Function  
 whose End is the Happiness of Man-  
 kind, in which they are equally con-  
 cern'd with us: I say, when the Que-  
 stion is only whether they may speak  
 their Experience in a Congregation,  
 and inform others (being moved there-  
 to by the Holy Spirit) of what they  
 think

think will conduce to their present and Eternal Welfare. 'Tis strange to me that every one does not presently give his Assent to it; but more strange that any one should go about to dispute it.

Would it not have been better for thee, my Friend (who couldst have done it so well) to have employed thy Pen in something that might have shown evidently, That Women were deprived of the Privilege of *Propheying* or *Preaching* in the Church, not till primitive Christianity began to be lost amongst its Professors, and that People, or rather the Priests, had mistook the Design of the Christian Religion (whether out of Ignorance or Knavishness I am loath to say) which was to propagate *Peace on Earth, and Good Will to all Men*, and made it to consist almost entirely in Speculative Doctrine, in dry and empty Forms, and in Ceremonies which have no Manner of Tendency to the good of Mankind. Such a thing as this would have been abundantly more agreeable with the Notes and Sentiments of Judicious *John Locke*, as every one knows that is acquainted with his Writings: And this would have illustrated that which thou hast reprinted of his, and might have been of great Service to Truth.

But instead of something like this, to make Observations neither consistent with  
them-

themselves, nor with the Learned Author's Paraphrase and Notes: To find Fault with the Appearances of Immodesty and Boldness in some Women, things which no one pleads for, and which are strait-way condemn'd by all. Where is the Service!

To write an Epistle by way of *Preface*, to a Person known to have been many Years in the Practice of *Teaching* in our Meetings, and to have travel'd Hundreds of Miles in the Service of the Gospel, and therein to set forth in an extraordinary Manner her Christian Virtues, her Authority, her Exercise, her Service, and the Edification likely to accrue from such Women as she, and after this to narrow Women up in their Gifts and Services: Where is the Consistence! Where was the Thought!

Nay, and in the very Epistle to make an unseemly Comparison, to compare some Women, not very unlike thy Friend, to *Bacchanets* and *Pythonefs*, as thou improperly termest 'em. This if understood must have *gated* on the Modesty of thy Friend. I am sure 'tis justly Offensive to *Sober Ears*; where then was the Regard to the very thing thou wert Judging?

*N. B. — m. p. in her Letter to B. C. found Fault with his Comparison.*

I am very sorry that any thing should have drop'd from thy Pen, to discourage the Service we do and may reap from the

Labours



Labours of Women; and did I not apprehend that an ill Use might be made of that which in *Charity* I hope thou didst not intend so, I should not have troubled thee with my Thoughts.

I will now wind up this long Letter, much longer than I first intended it, and tell thee something that I had from a *Person of known Probity*, some Years ago, and which perhaps thou never heard'st: which is, That *John Locke* being at a Meeting, where a certain North-Country Woman was, who had been Travelling on Truth's Account, was so affected with her Testimony; as to say afterwards in Words to this Effect *That something Divine and Extraordinary attended the Preaching of that Woman*. Now considering his Sentiments, and the Phrases and Terms contain'd in his Paraphrase and Notes on *Paul's Epistles*, so different from his former Writings, especially that Chapter of *Enthusiasm*, in his *Treatise of Human Understanding*: I say, considering all this, one may conclude, that 'tis probable, That this Woman occasioned much of the very Notes thou hast published of his.

This I leave to thy serious Reflection, and bid thee *Farewell*; who am

Thy Loving Friend,

J. Martin.

London, the 22<sup>d</sup> of  
Nov. 3<sup>d</sup> Mon. 1716.